791 This chief sorcerer was a kind of Delphic Oracle for the entire
756 interlacustrine region. He enjoyed such a high reputation that the kings of Urundi and Ruanda often sent missions to him to obtain the benefit of his counsel. The same is also frequently reported of the rulers of Usindja (No. 35, pp. 498, 506). As far as the sorcerers of Urundi, Kisiba, Ussumbwa, and other adjoining areas are concerned, we know that at times they travel to Uha in order to learn higher magic from the famous abafumu who live there. On the other hand, there are Baha medicine men who are employed as "court sorcerers" by various rulers of the interlacustrine region. The influential court sorcerer of the Urundi king, Mutaga, is also a Muhutu from Uha. His name is Kiburua (Ndandi), and he is well provided for by the king (report by von Langenn). It appears that all these Baha sorcerers are Bahutu, Bantu. This again is connected with the fact that the Bantu is by nature inclined toward mysticism and that the Bantu population is much older than the Bahima immigrants. There is no sorcerers' school in Urundi or Ruanda, where one might learn the secret teachings and practices from a "Council of Wise Men," but, as has been mentioned above, power and wisdom is passed on from one generation to the other within the family. Whoever has inherited these attributes and wishes to augment them must try to imitate the techniques of other magicians.

[132] As is evident from the examples reported by Father
756 Gasaldinger which have been listed above, the functions of the umufumu are extremely varied. They encompass all conceivable physical ailments of man and animal, and the umufumu applies innumerable natural and supernatural techniques for assuaging and curing them. In the opinion of the Barundi, however, the natural remedies are not successful merely because of their natural characteristics -- for what does he know about physical and chemical effects, about the physiology of the body, or about causality, etc. -- but their effects stem from supernatural
[753] powers imparted to them by the umufumu. They believe that sickness, when not a case of direct poisoning, is usually caused by the supernatural influence of evil spirits (abarosi). It is, of
756 course, true that the Murundi, for his domestic use, applies
757 a great number of simple remedies which have been passed down

756 to him for generations, but this is done before the "case" be-
●757 comes serious and requires the attention of an umufumu. These remedies are in a class by themselves (p. 140), and at this point we are only discussing sorcery, magic remedies and their application.

755 Regardless of the kind of remedy which is to be applied, the Murundi first tests its effectiveness by external application. Even those remedies which can only be of help if taken internally are first strapped or spread on the ailing part of the body since they are expected to have a magical power similar to an amulet. Even European medicines meant to be taken internally, such as pills, powders, or tablets, are first wrapped in a leaf by the Murundi and tied to the sick organ. Only if he does not feel any improvement after that, will he finally make up his mind to swallow or drink them.

751 There are countless numbers of true amulets (iviheko)
789 which are made of various substances and in various shapes. They are always worn suspended on the body in a small compact form (Plate 55). We have already listed quite a number of these above (p. 130). Usually they are suspended from the neck on strings, but frequently they are also tied to the head, to the belly, or to the genitalia, etc. At times each one hangs on a separate piece of string, at other times dozens of different kinds are strung up on a single piece of string, similar to a necklace. The material used for making the amulet is not as important as the sorcery through which the umufumu imparts supernatural powers to the object, but in most cases the amulet consists of a piece of wood three to six centimeters long, if for no other reason than that it is easiest to produce and to carry. One may also see claws or hooves of leopards, cats, goats, and sheep, the bones of birds, pieces of snake skin or the fur of wild animals, dried fruit, mussels, pebbles with unusual shapes, but, most frequently, powder from various types of soil, ashes of burnt bones or of the horns of animals, and flour made of various kinds of grain (No. 19, p. 29). Usually these powdery charms are poured into a small cattle, goat, or antelope horn whose opening is then closed with wax. Hollowed out fruit

[140] Chapter 10

# Medicine, Chronometry, Arithmetic, Language

## 1. Medicine

753 We have already discussed above (p. 132) the basic re-
755 ligious elements in the concepts of the Barundi about all kinds
757 of sickness and their remedies. To the Barundi, all illnesses are the result of sorcery by a demon, and they can be cured or alleviated only by counter-magic. This counter-magic may be performed by the sorcerer or medicine man (umufumu) by means of the magic powers vested in him. He may seek to affect the demon of sickness either by certain manipulations or incantations or by means of talismans and amulets which he has endowed with his powers, or he may choose with prudent circumspection and mature experience certain natural substances which have specific inherent magical powers, herbs, juices, types of earth, or the body parts of animals, and use them as specific remedies for each particular case.

757 I should like to describe this last type of application as being essentially medical treatment of the patient, for the decisive element is, after all, that these remedies have not been vested with their magic power and effectiveness by the umufumu, but rather they had these qualities originally. Without a thorough investigation, we are unable to answer the question whether we should say that the natives regard these properties as the expression of a soul inherent in the object or as the characteristic emanations of the object itself (in the sense of "emanism" as defined by Karutz, Zeitschrift für Ethnologie [Ethnological Journal], 1913, p. 545 ff.). For our present purposes this question is only of secondary importance. Such remedies, endowed with healing power a priori, can be effectively applied not only by the sorcerer but by any other intelligent man or woman familiar with their specific magical properties and able to select them properly. In addition to these remedies which are applied internally and externally,

757 there are others which rely on mechanical means for an effect, as, for instance, massage, enema, hot and cold baths, and, further, a small number of surgical operations from the simple
[752] opening of a boil to (allegedly) the Caesarean operation (see above, p. 110 ). Difficult cases are treated by an experienced, skillful umufumu, but for simple cases every father of a family uses a number of household remedies. The art of using them is passed on from father to son. If necessary, a sick neighbor is given the benefit of them also.

[141] Generally, the first remedy tried is hot or cold water. It is used for intensive rubdowns, for long baths in treating skin diseases, aching joints, insomnia, and fever. A Murundi
[515] enjoys taking a bath whenever a sufficient supply of water is available, but as soon as possible after the bath he will rub butter on his skin. There are several natural thermal baths in Urundi
[312] which are used not only by the people living in the vicinity. For example, a gushing thermal spring whose water temperature is 47° Centigrade is located near Kisagara, a village not far from the Mugera missionary station, and there is another one north of Tschiwitoke in the Ruzizi Valley. A kind of steam bath is given to persons with fever by alternately holding their heads and limbs over a pot of boiling, steaming water (No. 19, p. 183). Enemas of warm water to which some herbal juice has been added are very common. They are given by first introducing the end of a long hollow stalk of reed or a strong leaf folled into the form of a tube into the anus; then the person applying the treatment blows a mouthful of water through the other end of this pipe into the bowels (No. 19, p. 331). Adults frequently give an enema to themselves: they fill one of the long-necked bottle gourds with water, insert the narrow end of the long bottleneck into the anus, and then lift the calabash in such a manner as to permit the water to enter the bowels by its own weight. Enemas are used for stomach-aches of any kind, constipation, diarrhea, fever, etc.

[278] There are innumerable medicines made of inorganic, vegetable, and animal substances. Among these, poisons play a relatively minor role, for the Barundi do not even know how to make arrows poisonous. The Batwa often use very effective

757 poison on their arrows. Nevertheless, besides magical conceptions, the fear of poison is probably the main reason why most medicines are first applied externally to the skin or worn in a poultice. Only after this method fails to produce results do they decide to take the medicine internally (cf. also p. 132).

One of the popular external remedies is the burning of the skin (cauterization) on the ailing part of the body. For this purpose a mixture of grease and wood ashes is first rubbed on the skin, then a red-hot piece of iron is applied to it. Afterward a little butter is rubbed on to alleviate the pain (No. 19, p. 91). In other cases a sharp knife is used instead of a hot piece of iron. It is used either as an especially strong irritant or for drawing blood. The method is similar to that of tattooing (p. 79). The Murundi does not actually practice blood-letting nor does he open the veins of human patients, although he frequently uses an arrowhead for bleeding cattle so as to enjoy their blood (p. 45). 752 Boils on the surface of the skin are opened with a needle or a knife. If a person is suffering from aching limbs, a series of small incisions are made in the skin with the local type of razor. Certain healing ointments or powders are then applied to the wound. The technique of cupping is also known. [Fig. 18 appears here in the original text.] It is applied by placing a piece of cattle horn (Fig. 18), [142] with the point pierced, on the place where an incision has been made in the skin. Through the hole in the horn the wound is then sucked until a sufficient amount of blood has been extracted (No. 19, p. 527).

However, the Barundi are very much afraid of deeper incisions, even if they are made by a European. A Murundi physician never performs amputations of limbs. Broken arms or legs are adroitly and carefully put in splints by placing them between two flat boards of wood which are then held firmly together with strips of barkcloth so that movement is impossible. Considering the prevailing disinclination for surgical operations, it appears very doubtful to me whether the Barundi actually perform as difficult an operation as the Caesarean on living women as van der Burgt mentions in a short note (No. 19, p. 363).

[Text continues on page 221]

[141] The average stature of the Batwa, or Negrillos, does not ex-
142 ceed 1.59 meters. Short and stocky, rather poorly proportioned, they tend to have ungraceful bodies. They are hairy; their chest especially presents a large surface of hair. Prognathism is more pronounced among them than among the Bahutu. They are also less sensitive to
147 cold and fatigue, at least those who live in the woods, for they are used to privation and to the inclemency of the seasons.

[165] Their vigor and longevity are now proverbial. This is why the
551 Batutsi and Bahutu like to give their children Batwa names, such as Mutwa, Gatwa, /30/ Lwamukore, Sekarahenyi, etc., as if they could infuse the physical traits of that race into them along with the
757 names (1). Any bone, so long as it has belonged to a Negrillo, is
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1. In the same line of thought and for similar reasons, the Blacks often bear the names of certain animals such as the hyena, lion, dog, etc.

reputed to be a sovereign remedy for an infirmity called makonyora, which is one of the aftermaths of yaws.

[75] Little bones of this sort are worn around the neck as amulets.
789 The Bahutu faith in this kind of grigri goes further. Until recently, they believed all that was needed to improve the yield of a field was to throw a Negrillo's finger into it, hence the word ilemo ("creation," that is, "fertility") given to this sort of object, and the word kulemesha ("to fertilize") referring to the procedure.

563 The way of life, habits, and temperament of the Negrillos in no way resemble those of the other ethnic groups (2). The Batutsi are

144

2. Prehistorians and physical anthropologists "have scientifically proved that the dwarfs, or pygmies, who have been found at all times in some parts of Africa, belong to a human race distinct from the Blacks.
142 Not only are they, on the average,

755 his hand with kaolin, places the nzuzi seeds and the bone on his hand, spits on them, and says: "ngira amagara (I am strong)." He shakes his hand and tosses the contents into a small basket, ntaro. Then he pours eleusine from the gourd into the basket. He spits on the eleusine and hands the basket to the person for whom he is performing the ceremony, who likewise spits into the basket. For the second time the mupfumu takes the bone and the nzuzi seeds out with the words, "ngira amagara." He shakes them in his hand as though mixing them. He tosses the contents of his hand into a round basket with the words, "ngira amagara," and puts the basket to one side. Then he hands the basket containing the eleusine to the man, who spits into it and says: "n'dapfa (I am dying)." Thereupon the soothsayer spits into it with the words, "ngira amagara." The tormented one says: "n'ziranyu muzimu (I am suffering at the hands of this spirit)," and gives its name. The individual spirits are named in this manner, the soothsayer and the man alternately going through the ritual of spitting. This performance is known as kushora umuzimu, "appeasing the spirits." When this is finished, the soothsayer takes the small basket that has been set aside with the cow bone, the nzuzi seeds, and a few eleusine seeds, and he hands it to the tormented one, who spits into it and says: "ngira ubuhoro (I am at peace)." The soothsayer moves the basket with the words: "agira ubuhoro (he is at peace)"; "atapfa (he will not die)"; "atafushe (he would not like to be killed)"; "azaturaho (he will remain)." After these words the sorcerer tosses everything into the calabash, and the ceremony is ended.

In payment for his services the mupfumu gets peas, sweet potatoes, etc.

[325] I was unable to find out anything about true medical 755
treatment and the methods of cure, since this involves a knowledge 757
of the local flora. The natives themselves know far less about this than about the impressive ceremonies of auto-suggestive cures. I should merely like to say that the remedies are taken internally and applied externally and are also worn on the body in small horns 767
and vessels as amulets. The amulets containing medicine are tied

[Text continues on p. 264]

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42



from the great commercial centres where there is an important transient foreign population of Africans from the Congo, Arabs, Indians, and Europeans. They are not new in so far as the factors favouring their spread have been in existence for a very long time. I have already mentioned the inadequate clothing of children. Bark-cloth and hides which were not washed, grass and reed huts and enclosures where cattle were living near the dwellings, which were never built in the valleys, were effective deterrents to corporal cleanliness. The Tutsi took hot baths and washed and rubbed themselves with perfumed butter, but the Hutu, particularly the women, did not seem to wash completely very often, if ever.[29]

Defences against these diseases were, as one may expect, very inferior compared with those which Western medical science can now provide. When somebody was ill and the usual remedies known to every old person did not work, he had to have recourse to a herbal expert. I have been told by a missionary who had studied the question for several years that knowledge of these medicinal plants was very often extremely penetrating and that cures, especially in dysentery and other intestinal diseases, were quite often successful. These remedies were collected or administered in a magical context. When that course of action did not produce the expected results, the diviner (*mupfumu*) had to be consulted. He was an interpreter of the will of God (Imana), which he could read in the patterns made by knuckle-bones, in the viscera of chickens, rams, and bulls, or even by a certain intuition without the help of any apparatus. Some diviners used a medium, usually a female possessed by Biheko, an important spirit of the dead, or were possessed themselves. The diviner was asked to identify the malevolent agent sending the illness, which could be either a *muzimu* (spirit of a dead person) or a *murozi* (sorcerer). If the spirit was identified, the diviner could tell what would appease him, and could offer some counter-magic to deal with a sorcerer.[30]

These resorts to the non-material world probably had the useful function of making bearable a situation in which nothing could otherwise be done to alter the course of the illness. It is doubtful, however, if this method had any other effect on the patient's health.

[29] Cf. Czekanowski, 1917, pp. 118-21. [30] See photographs in Maquet, 1957.

10:Albert E-5 (1956-1957)1963
FO42 Rundi FO42



pick up a piece of firewood and chase the hyena. However, if she hears thieves or a lion or antelope or wild pigs in the fields, she gives the cry of alarm so that the neighbours will come to help her. One need not think that the Rundi consider a woman courageous who is at home alone night after night with several babies and who chases away wild animals and thieves.[18]

In a Tutsi household, all of the tasks of the Hutu household must be done and in addition those which result from the fact that the houses and the yard are used as corral and barns. If a Tutsikazi is lucky, her husband is wealthy enough to provide her with Hutu to do the farming and with one or more Hutu or Tutsi girls to help her in the house and yard. If this is the case, the Tutsikazi's job is to command and supervise others. However, even a Tutsukazi of a very good patrilineage will very likely have to work at least a little in the fields and do some cooking and other household chores. Whether it is the wife, a daughter, or a servant girl, somebody has to clean the yard after the cows have been taken to pasture. The cow dung has to be collected and taken to the fields where it is needed as fertilizer. Fresh earth has to be spread over the puddles and mud that the cows have left, and it is necessary to look in on the calves that are kept in the various houses of the dwelling unit. If a calf or a child or a Hutu is sick, the mistress of the house must prepare the medicine. The wife of a herder has as her first obligation the proper care of the milk which her husband or the boy who milks the cow gives into her care in the morning and the evening. She lets it accumulate so that she can churn every few days. Then, she must clean the butter and put aside some to be used for cooking, some to be mixed with red ochre to be used as a cosmetic, some to annoint the mats of the bed when her husband is at home. If the family is not rich enough to pay a herd boy and if the sons are still young, the Tutsi husband and wife take turns watching over the cows at night. At dawn, both may sleep: thieves will not come once it is daylight.

The richer one is, the more serfs and servants there are to do the work in the house and the fields and to attend to the cattle. Among the very wealthy, the wife is primarily the administrator of her husband's property. She supervises the workers, she gives them orders, she punishes those who misbehave and those who are lazy, and she receives visitors, who are frequently men of high position. The proper education of a Tutsikazi of good family is the responsibility either of her mother or of the princess in whose household she is brought up. There is hope that a daughter will be married by a wealthy man, that she will be literally a *mwamikazi* who will never have to do menial tasks.